

Resolution on Sexual Abuse

WHEREAS, the Bible is clear in its affirmation that children are a gift from the Lord (Psalm 127:3-6); and

WHEREAS, the Lord Jesus demonstrated His love for children by encouraging them to follow Him, correcting those who hindered them, and condemning those who harmed them (Matthew 18:3-6; Mark 10:13-14); and

WHEREAS, the Bible stresses the protection of and care for children, as evidenced by: its condemnation of the ancient pagan practice of child sacrifice (Leviticus 20:1-7; Ezekiel 16:20-21); its special regard for orphans in the nation of Israel (Deuteronomy 24,26); and the teaching of Jesus, who welcomed and valued little children (Matthew 18:1-5; 19:14); that all people are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27); and that we are called to give justice to and rescue the weak (Psalm 82:3-4) and

WHEREAS, violent physical and sexual crimes against children, women, and men have reached alarming levels in our nation, thus showing sexual abuse and child abuse to be a leading issue requiring the urgent response of God's people; and

WHEREAS, this abuse has occurred too often in churches and homes—which ought to be places of shelter and safety—and it has happened at the hands of family, educators, ordained ministers, and ministry workers—who ought to be trusted person of authority; and

WHEREAS, high moral character, good public witness and a reputation above reproach are required of all pastors and church leaders (1 Timothy 3:1-12; Titus 1:6-9); now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we urge Advent Christian churches and denominational entities to exercise moral stewardship by observing responsible employment practices, including performing criminal background checks, including sex offender registry, on all ministers, employees, and volunteers; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we urge all Advent Christian conferences to exercise moral stewardship by observing responsible employment practices, in instituting a mandatory policy of requiring criminal background checks, including sex offender registry, on all candidates for licensure and ordination; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we urge conference ministerial committees to immediately and permanently revoke the ministerial license or ordination of anyone listed on the sexual predator database or anyone who has been convicted of any crime of a sexual nature; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we renounce the heinous acts committed against children, women, and men; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we strongly recommend that the Advent Christian churches and conferences respond to any suspicions or allegations of child abuse in a timely and forthright manner; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we likewise call upon all Advent Christians to cooperate fully with law enforcement officials in exposing and bringing to justice all perpetrators, sexual or otherwise, who criminally harm children, women, and men placed in our trust; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we bring to light and rebuke individuals, churches, or other religious bodies and institutions that cover up, ignore, or otherwise contribute to or condone the abuse of children, women, and men; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we pray for righteousness and justice to prevail in our land and intercede on behalf of sexual abuse survivors, asking God to heal their deep emotional and physical wounds, grow them into mature and healthy adults and stop the cycle of abuse from repeating in another generation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we implore perpetrators of such crimes to repent of their sins and seek God's forgiveness and mercy; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we implore perpetrators of such crimes to seek Godly counsel and therapies as available from licensed professionals.